ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

# Indirect Speech MCQ Test With Answers + PDF Exercise 3

English Grammar Tests · 20 questions · Online test and questions PDF:
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| 1 | **E** | 2 | **D** | 3 | **E** | 4 | **A** | 5 | **E** | 6 | **B** | 7 | **C** | 8 | **D** | 9 | **A** | 10 | **B** |
| 11 | **B** | 12 | **C** | 13 | **C** | 14 | **D** | 15 | **E** | 16 | **A** | 17 | **D** | 18 | **C** | 19 | **C** | 20 | **B** |

## Explanations

**1.** Nick whispered: “I know that the boys were angry with me.” Nick whispered that _____.
✔ **E) he knew that the boys had been angry with him**
After a past reporting verb (**whispered**), tenses move one step back: **know → knew** and **were → had been**. **Me** becomes **him**, because Nick is talking about himself. Not **...angry with me**, because the pronoun must change to **him**.

**2.** Alice is told: “Clean your teeth twice a day!” Alice is told _____
✔ **D) to clean her teeth twice a day**
An order in reported speech becomes **to** + infinitive: **told to clean**. **Your** changes to **her** because we are talking about Alice. Not **clean her teeth**, because **told** needs **to** before the verb.

**3.** I am always asked _____.
✔ **E) if I am on duty**
A reported yes/no question uses **if** or **whether** and normal word order (subject before verb): **if I am on duty**. The reporting verb **am asked** is in the present, so the tense does not change. Not **why am I late**, because reported questions do not use question word order.

**4.** Julia continued, “You said, ‘I know the owner and always get good service.’ So you said _____ good service.”
✔ **A) you knew the owner and always got**
After the past reporting verb **said**, the present simple usually moves back to the past simple: **know → knew**, **get → got**. The original words contain **always**, so the reported sentence keeps it: **you knew the owner and always got good service**. The other options leave out **always** or change the meaning with **will** or **going to**.

**5.** Julia continued, “You said, ‘I have been here before.’ So you said _____.”
✔ **E) you had been here before**
After the past reporting verb **said**, the present perfect moves back to the past perfect: **have been → had been**. The reported sentence uses normal word order: **you had been here before**. Not **had you been here before**, because that is question word order. The other options do not match the original words.

**6.** He wanted to know _____.
✔ **B) if she knew him**
A reported yes/no question uses **if** or **whether** with normal word order (subject before verb). After the past verb **wanted to know**, the tense moves back: **Does she know him? → if she knew him**. Not **whether does she know him** or **did she know him**, because reported questions do not use question word order.

**7.** “When will you be there, Tom?” asked Dan. Dan asked Tom _____.
✔ **C) when he would be there**
In a reported question, **will** becomes **would** after the past verb **asked**, and the word order is normal: **when he would be there**. **You** (Tom) becomes **he**. Not **when will he be there**, because reported questions do not use question word order.

**8.** He said to me: “I’ll come as soon as I can”. He told me that _____.
✔ **D) he would come as soon as he could**
After **told**, **will** becomes **would** and **can** becomes **could**. Both **I**s become **he**, because the speaker is talking about himself. Not **as soon as I could**, because **I** in his words means him, not me.

**9.** He has just said, “I want to speak to you”. He has just said _____.
✔ **A) he wants to speak to me**
When the reporting verb is in the present or present perfect (**has just said**), the tense of the original words does not change: **want** stays **wants**. Only the pronouns change: **I → he**, **you → me**. Not **he wanted**, because backshift happens only after a past reporting verb.

**10.** Mother told me: “Don’t stay out long.” Mother told me _____.
✔ **B) not to stay out long**
A negative order in reported speech becomes **not to** + verb: **told me not to stay out long**. Not **don’t stay out long**, because we do not keep the imperative after **told me**.

**11.** “Where did they spend the vacation?” Tom said _____.
✔ **B) they had spent it at the seaside.**
Tom is answering the question. After the past verb **said**, past simple moves back to past perfect: **spent → had spent**. Not **they have spent it at home**, because present perfect is not used after **said** here.

**12.** The secretary said to the visitor: “When did you graduate from the University?” The secretary asked the visitor _____.
✔ **C) when he had graduated from the University.**
In a reported question, past simple moves back to past perfect (**did you graduate → he had graduated**). The word order is normal, with no **did**. Not **when did he graduate**, because that keeps question word order.

**13.** “What will you do if Jack is out when you come?” She asked me _____.
**✓ C) what I would do if Jack was out when I came**
After **asked**, every verb moves one step back: **will do → would do**, **is → was**, **come → came**. The word order is normal: **what I would do**. Not **what would I do** or **what will I do**, because reported questions do not use question word order.

**14.** Jane said, “I shall help you.” Jane said _____.
**✓ D) she would help us**
After the past verb **said**, **shall** (future) becomes **would**. **I** becomes **she**, and **you** becomes the people Jane was talking to, here **us**: **she would help us**. Not **she would helped us**, because **would** is followed by the base form of the verb.

**15.** The manager wondered _____.
**✓ E) if the secretary had come**
After the past verb **wondered**, the reported question needs a past form: **if the secretary had come**. All the other options keep present tenses (**can**, **are**, **has been**), which do not fit after a past reporting verb.

**16.** I _____ I _____ her back.
**✓ A) thought / would get**
After the past verb **thought**, future **will** becomes **would**: **I thought I would get her back**. Not **shall get**, because it does not move back after a past verb.

**17.** The father wondered _____.
**✓ D) if his daughter had passed her exams**
After the past verb **wondered**, the reported question uses a past form and normal word order: **if his daughter had passed her exams**. The other options keep present tenses, which do not fit after **wondered**.

**18.** The teacher asked her pupils _____.
**✓ C) where their textbooks were**
A reported question has normal word order (subject before verb), and after the past verb **asked** it uses a past tense: **where their textbooks were**. Not **where were their textbooks** or **where are their textbooks**, because those keep question word order.

**19.** I _____ my mother _____ want to meet her new son-in-law for the first time in my presence.
**✓ C) knew / would not**
The main verb is past (**knew**), so the future in the second part becomes **would**: **I knew my mother would not want to meet...**. Not **knows / will not**, because **knows** does not agree with **I**.

**20.** The man said: “I have brought all my things.” The man said _____.
**✓ B) that he had brought all his things.**
After the past verb **said**, the present perfect moves back to the past perfect: **have brought → had brought**. **I** and **my** become **he** and **his**. Not **that he had bring**, because **had** needs the past participle **brought**. Not **all my things**, because the things belong to the man.

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